

Association for Cancer Physicians releases cancer patient strategy for UK

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The Association for Cancer Physicians (ACP), which represents and supports medical oncologists in the UK, has published a new Strategy for improving cancer patient services and outcomes.

The Strategy has been published in the open-access journal *ecancermedicalscience*, where it is freely available to read.

"The ACP, with input from [patients](#), has worked hard to produce this Strategy," says strategy author Prof Peter Selby, Professor of Cancer Medicine at the University of Leeds and Consultant Physician at St James's University Hospital.

"The Strategy focuses on improving the quality of life and survival of [cancer patients](#) towards the goal in two decades of over 70% of patients surviving for more than 10 years."

"Cancer is a common problem, directly affecting 1 in 2 people in their lifetime," notes author Dr Sarah Payne, an Honorary Consultant at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust, and Medical Affairs Manager of Pfizer UK.

She explains that advances in prevention and early detection, treatment options for patients, and understanding of the biology of the disease have led to over 50% of UK cancer patients surviving their disease for 10 years or more.

"Oncology as a specialty has contributed substantially to these improvements over the last 25 years," says Dr Payne.

The comprehensive Strategy is authored by influential medical oncologists from around the UK, who invited input from experts in each area, as well as patient perspectives. It reflects a significant evolution of medical oncology planning and practice in the United Kingdom.

In the UK, as in the rest of Europe, healthcare is

under tremendous pressure, the strategy explains, with increasing service demands, an aging population and increasing costs generating pressure on NHS services.

The authors feel that medical oncology is in a place to provide leadership and support for colleagues in all of the healthcare professions in the management of the pressures in cancer care.

"Notably, the aims are to improve the delivery of excellent and safe [medical oncology](#) care for patients, contribute to the overall development of the NHS and provide a substantial contribution to the development of innovative approaches to cancer care," continues Dr Sarah Payne. "This is vital at a time of unprecedented acceleration of knowledge, rapid changes in the management of patients and the therapies available and the increased demand on cancer services and financial constraints on the NHS."

The aim is for the strategy to bring about the developments and changes through the actions of its members at all stages of their career and their involvement with policy makers at the local, national and international levels."

The strategy is "a living document" and will be reviewed annually, reflecting the changing landscape of [cancer](#) care in the UK.

The authors write, "We hope to be able to show steady progress in the outcomes for our patients and demonstrate the value of the ACP's increasing contributions, as the specialty of Medical Oncology continues to grow in coming years."

More information: Richard Baird et al. An Association of Cancer Physicians' strategy for improving services and outcomes for cancer patients, *ecancermedicalscience* (2016). DOI: [10.3332/ecancer.2016.608](https://doi.org/10.3332/ecancer.2016.608)

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